

## Message Text

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ACTION AF-04

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 EA-06 NSC-05 NSCE-00 INR-05

CIAE-00 PRS-01 SCCT-01 /037 W  
----- 067625

R 140952Z AUG 75

FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5899  
INFO AMCONSUL ASMARA

C O N F I D E N T I A L ADDIS ABABA 9810

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS PINT ET

SUBJECT: ELF DETENTION OF TWO JAPANESE IN JAN.- FEB.

1. OF POSSIBLE INTEREST TO DEPT IS FOLLOWING STORY OF ELF DETENTION AND RELEASE OF TWO JAPANESE DURING FEB-MARCH THIS YEAR. INCIDENT HAD BEEN REPORTED BRIEFLY BY EMBASSY. SOURCE IS JAPANESE AMB SHO SPOKE IN CONFIDENCE TO AMB HUMMEL, EMPHASIZING THAT THERE HAS BEEN NO PUBLICITY OF THIS INCIDENT AND GOJ DOES NOT WANT ANY.

2. IN LATE JANUARY, BEFORE FLARE-UP OF FIGHTING AROUND ASMARA, TWO VOLUNTEERS FROM JAPANESE VOLUNTEER PROGRAM TOOK WEEKEND RIDE ON THEIR MOTORCYCLES FROM ASMARA TOWARD KEREN. THEY ELECTED TO USE A SIDE ROAD TO AVOID GOVT CHECKPOINT, ENCOUNTERING AN ELF UNIT THAT DETAINED THEM, EVENTUALLY EMERGING IN ASMARA ABOUT A MONTH LATER, AFTER FEBRUARY FIGHTING HAD DIED DOWN.

3. JAPANESE EMB INFORMED EPMG AND REQUESTED THAT EPMG REFRAIN FROM MILITARY OPERATIONS THAT MIGHT ENDANGER PRISONERS. HANDWRITTEN LETTERS FROM DETAINEES WERE RECEIVED BY EMBASSY, BUT GOJ FELT IT COULD NOT REPLY DIRECTLY, FEARING IT WOULD ANNOY EPMG. (NOTE: WE BELIEVE VOLUNTEER CORPS DID COMMUNICATE.) EMBASSY TRIED TO WORK THROUGH COMMITTEE OF ERITREAN ELDERS, WHO WERE TRYING TO MEDIATE BETWEEN GOVT AND GUERRILLAS AT THAT TIME, WITHOUT SUCCESS. INSURGENTS WERE AT FIRST HIGHLY SUSPICIOUS OF TRUE MOTIVES AND  
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AND OBJECTIVES OF THE VOLUNTEERS BUT AFTER INTERROGATION REALIZED

THEY WERE INNOCENT TRAVELERS AND RELEASED THEM WITHOUT ANY RANSOM DEMANDS. THE TWO HAD MOVED FREQUENTLY WITHIN ERITREA ALONG WITH THEIR CAPTORS.

4. ON ARRIVAL IN ASMARA THE TWO WERE PROMPTLY ARRESTED BY EQUALLY SUSPICIOUS EPMG AUTHORITIES, BUT AFTER REPRESENTATIONS BY EMBASSY AND CHIEF OF JAPANESE VOLUNTEER CORPS, WERE RELEASED AND REPATRIATED.  
HUMMEL

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NNN

## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** Z  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** DETENTION, PRISONERS RELEASE, PRESS RELEASES, NEGOTIATIONS  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 14 AUG 1975  
**Decaption Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Decaption Note:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** woolflhd  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
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**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
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**Previous Handling Restrictions:** LIMDIS  
**Reference:** n/a  
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**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
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**Secure:** OPEN  
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**Subject:** ELF DETENTION OF TWO JAPANESE IN JAN.- FEB.  
**TAGS:** PINS, PINT, ET, JA, ELF  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
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